

# ZABALAZA

P.O. BOX 795 ISLINGTON N1 8LP

TEL: 071 358 0802 / FAX: 639 9710

FAX TO: LAVINIA GREENLAW  
PRINCIPAL LITERATURE OFFICER  
DATE: 4TH MAY 1993

Dear Lavinia

RE: LITERATURE LIVE 1993 /4

Please find further information as requested in your fax of 29th April 1993. —

- 1) The fee of 10 times 150.00 is for a part-time Conference Co-ordinator to work for a period of 10 weeks - 8 weeks prior to the Conference and 2 weeks thereafter. The Conference Co-ordinator will be responsible for finalising arrangements for the panels and will oversee the collation of all documentation and the publishing of the conference report.
- 2) The Conference title is **DISPOSSESSED VOICES: Racism and Resistance.**

This two-day event, scheduled for September 1993 seeks to address and explore this theme. Wherever a people has been dispossessed of its voice, its writers have been forced to engage with these issues. This common struggle links writers throughout the world - from Ireland, Scotland and Wales to the Carribbean, the Americas, Australasia, the Indian Sub-Continent, Africa, South East Asia.

When looking at this theme we also consider the related struggle of women whose voices have been systematically excluded and marginalised.

**\*Possible Schedule:**

**DAY ONE:**

10.30 - 12.30	LANGUAGE AND OPPRESSION
2.30 - 4.30	WORKSHOPS
	(Possible themes: "Subverting the Cannon" "Most of them are Dead Now")
7.30 - 11pm	WRITERS - IN- PERFORMANCE

**DAY TWO:**

10.30 - 12.30	LIBERATION BEGINS IN THE IMAGINATION
2.30 - 4.30	WORKSHOPS / RELATED READINGS
4.30 - 5.30	CLOSING SESSION

\* Due to the fact that I am still in South Africa, it has not been possible to finalise the panel topics but this will be finalised by the end of May. Several of the names listed below have already

committed themselves to taking part in this event.

In addition to the writers already mentioned, we are inviting Nawar Al Sadawi, Joyoti Grech, Jane Cortez, Tom Leonard, Chinweizu, June Jordan, Jean Binta Breeze, Ngugi Wa Thiongo, Gillian Slovo, Margaret Busby. (u.s./A)

On the basis of previous conferences attendances, we anticipate between 75 - 150 participants for each day and additional audience for the evening readings.

- 3) The cost of the venue hire is 700.00. The sound system, with sufficient capability for live readings and a facility to record all conference proceedings, will be 400.00.
- 4) We have had confirmation of our 1993/94 Grant from Lambeth Environmental Services which includes a subsidy of 3,750 towards this project. We are committed to going ahead with this project at the end of September.

I hope this information will suffice.

We look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours sincerely



 MANDLA LANGA  
Chair - Management Committee

Minutes of Brainstorm Meeting - 17th June 1993

Present: Mandla Langa, Dada Imarogbe, Su Lubner, Hazel Carey, Margaret Busby,  
Pitika Ntuli, Peter Blackman, Dawn Garrigan, Linda Bernhardt

Apologies: Ethel De Keyser, Audrey Brown, John La Rose, Jumbo Vanrenen

1) Elections

Mandla provided an outline of developments in SA, the provisional election date of 27th April, the problems posed by Cosag and the difficulties confronting the transitional process.

Mandla noted that the media misshapes our images. The SA elections will become a showcase because it has not happened before. We need to explore the possibility for the creative community to go to SA to strengthen both the pre- and post election situation. This has to be done in an organised way. People need to be briefed. The coming generations will ask about apartheid and this will not be understood as a disease world-wide.

Mobilising votes is key. We have to remember that each vote that is not registered is one for the Nats.

Pitika noted that there were various models for development and that people from UK and USA would all be competing to implement programmes but the importance is to work from the needs on the ground. He pointed out the need for administrative infrastructure in many projects. Key people in admin posts should go and see what is happening and help set up relevant systems. Also the danger of the regime co-opting people because of its extensive resources should be kept in mind.

Mandla pointed out that artists visiting SA had a commitment to be part of the process of education i.e. by running workshops and training trainers e.g. RSC.

There were lessons to be learnt from the recent American elections where Clinton galvanised the youth by means of the music industry and developed other strategies to develop voter awareness.

Dada felt that pre-elections visits are needed now. People going need to be made aware and that Mandla's words - "Apartheid means that people are homeless

people are killed

people are uneducated

people are illiterate

convey the message that needs to be clear. People here need to see that going there is a responsibility. There is still a power struggle.

There is a big resource of people who come from places where people vote and this needs to be utilised.

Peter made the point that cost would be a major obstacle in getting people to SA.

- a) Need to locate committees to look for money
- b) Set up small international network of trusted people to find ways to fund social activity programme
- c) Contact existing funding tables e.g. ACP
- d) It takes at least 6 or 7 months to get answers from some of these sources so actions is needed now.
- e) 1995 Olympics is taking place in Atlanta and the woman co-ordinating the theatre and dance programme might be open to some kind of international initiative.

The purpose of the brainstorm sessions is to look at how our combined energies and creativities can be utilised in this region. When we look at racism it is not only the statutory racism of SA but , its operation in other parts of the world and we need to understand and learn how to deal with this issue. Racism needs to be dealt with, the conference in September is a starting point.

## 2) Conference in September - Voices: Racism and Resistance

The following points were made:

- a) Previous conferences people have not prepared adequately, people should all be asked to prepare papers in advance
- b) Conference papers should all be collected and published. The conference should be videoed if possible.
- c) Incidence of racism in the run-up to the conference should be monitored through the media. Cuttings and videos collected and available at the conference. We should try to get someone in France and Germany to undertake similar monitoring.
- d) Input from the youth should be included
- e) Conferences on racism generally convey the negative. This conference needs to be more positive in terms of ways forward.
- f) The role of mothers in terms of fighting racism through education etc should not be overlooked.
- g) We need to present the conference creatively - particularly the evening readings

It was agreed that care needs to be taken in formulating conference debates. We need to look at all aspects.

- Cumulative aspects of racism
- Liberation begins in the imagination / Augusto Boal *Rep in the Hand*

- Language - the need to be clear about the parameters of the debate. Dance, music etc are also languages
- What aspects of the media (Dealing with all formations in this country that deal with public opinion)

Pitika and Hazel were charged with preparing guidelines for further discussion at the next meeting.

3) Anti-Racism Day.

We need to give a message to the state that it cannot pick and choose who to victimise. We need to call all people who are marginalised in this country and stage an event. Possibly calling all performers to a march/ pageant - outdoor event - which aims to educate through entertainment.

It was agreed that this idea needs to be talked through more fully. PB suggested that it might be the kind of idea to run past Peter Palumbo (Arts Council). On agenda for next meeting.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY 8TH JULY - 6.30PM at BDAF**

# :RACISM and RESISTANCE

## LANGUAGE

ROXY CHOMSKY  
PEDRO TOM

(Mamster G. Stein)

Elfrida Jethi Nek

Tsitsi SURESH

Gillim Shoo

Minim Makeda

Joyoti Grech

Jane Cortez

NTAMULO NDEBEE

# ROCKEFELLER'S DISPOSSESSED VOICES

TEL.: 648-8173

DATE WAITER PERS TABLE

"The Importance of Women's  
Hawar El Sadawi Struggle"

Dirk Coetzee S. M. G  
Linton

NGUGI  
CHIMWIZU

"Language & Power"  
"Hegemony"  
"Imperialism"

Liberation begins in the  
literary imagination

Racism

PLEASE TIP WAITER  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE.  
TOTAL

LANGUAGE, OPPRESSION & RACISM  
002418-15

containing means of control  
and present

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an obvious  
Any language is VALUE-LADEN. ENGLISH is a ~~good~~ example. In so many countries throughout the world this has been the language of imperial power. By the systematic imposition of ~~the~~ "high" English the english-speaking elites have colonised much if not most of the world. This 2-day event seeks to explore this theme, <sup>concentrating on issues</sup> ~~concentrating on issues~~ <sup>such as</sup> ~~such as~~ racism <sup>perhaps the most</sup> ~~perhaps the most~~ <sup>insidious side effect.</sup> ~~insidious side effect.~~ The struggle by writers against the imperialist power of English is of fundamental importance. This struggle is not contained in any one country nor in any one community of writers. The debate on decolonisation of ~~the language~~ diverse literatures around the world ~~is~~ integral within the struggle has been ~~the~~ women's resistance to male hegemony. Women have fought to clear language of "male-value". ~~Their influence on the work of~~ They have struggled and continue to struggle for that most basic of all human rights: freedom of expression. Their voices have been systematically excluded and marginalised. They have <sup>resisted</sup> ~~not~~ <sup>subverted</sup> and transforming language and their influence on the ~~the~~ war against linguistic oppression is absolutely integral to the ~~the~~ <sup>overall</sup> struggle against racism.

HAOS - INTERMEDIATE (p3 foot)

Dialogue p 4

p35 "By mid 1960's substantial work, but no attention from mainstream. No WI critics published, lack of informed assessment, urgent need for criticism and critical criteria appropriate to WI art, for an aesthetic not tied to Euro Art. WI writers and artists in B working out new forms, experimenting with new language, wanting to share ideas and their work with each other. [also] the WI population in B constituted a potential audience."

JLR's publishing ideas. New books and important out-of-print titles. people being deprived of information and a sense of continuity... people convicted in court because they couldn't defend themselves - speech misunderstood THOMAS studying and systematising peoples speech. JLR forced into exile as young man for his political activities. He was "seeking a political end to colonialism and came to it thru culture"

EXB went to work in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) with his wife Doris (Wellcome) ~~as~~ a teacher (and) became immersed in the rural community life and traditional culture of a part of West Africa where slaves to WI come from. "... aware of limitations of individual working alone, advantages of corporate thought... possibilities of oral poetry... false colonial baggage."

Moved back to Caribbean, involved in Extra Mural programme etc. DORIS, his wife's importance after verbal rebellion of WI writers. "I kinda settle the argument that "dialect" in poetry could be used seriously". He was shown JLR's poetry and recognised similarity of purpose

EKB  
p42

CAM CAM 2  
EKB had been ~~was being~~ published for a while but no feedback. He became interested in the lack of communication by exiles when he returned to London "we wanted first of all to have the writers meet together so we could talk" **BORN FROM SOMETHING QUITE NEW P35**

A.S.

A key person, his work and intimacy with the lit/art establishment; cosmopolitan, world-wide contacts.

p43/4

Prolific writer and broadcaster - free-lance. Also an anthologist, describes himself as "a good sort of donkey person, I love the introducer role". As a student at London Uni he had "devised an alternative learning plan because he "damn well wanted to talk to Jamaicans about Jamaica in the long poem I was hoping to write" "I began to realise myself as a colonial and us as a colony, and our history, and the way we were at everybody's beck & call. Our economy wasn't ours. Even our language wasn't really ours." Marxist based politics of all 3 Learning from CLAUDIA JONES that Marxism and racism weren't exclusive. He did three interviews with M.L. King for Radio both BBC and W.I. He didn't join any one group - including Black Power Groups in late 1960's but "figured I'd serve nearly all and be useful to ~~many~~ all" Political activist. He saw JLR as his political friend, met at some protests and demonstrations - JLR's publishing dreams

p44

They didn't regard WRITERS GROUPS too highly, based on personal experience because "writer's job was to concentrate on himself" A.S. a writer who likes community unlike others who are quite capable of standing alone: Naipol, Sam Selvon, Harris, Lanning! At the early stages none of the major names were involved in CAM for lit, charity and criticism P10

p47

47 **LEADER QUOTE** The three didn't "want an organisation, just a forum to bring people together." "WRITERS, ARTISTS and CRITICS" "people not necessarily writers artists themselves but interested in literature and art and culture"

48 At this early stage the concept of w.l. writers and artists in company with British and others - not at all exclusive. Ngugi mentioned early on.

First thing they looked for was a place for meetings etc. E. Lucie-Smith approached, his experience with Holbaum etc late 50's early 60's 1st MEET DEC 1966 Not every body too enthusiastic. Too ambitious etc. What FOCUS? Artists together a contradiction in terms.

p51 Early meeting "dialogue on W.I. aesthetic" Orlando Patterson's Caribbean social realism FANON "all one has has been learned from Col. experience"

p52 NEGRITUDE NOT AN ALTERNATIVE

53 "I think all our art has to be didactic"

Patterson's position fiercely challenged

54 Criticism of CAM's failure to explore Indo-Caribbean traditions. CAM name suggested by Marys Patterson - a point recollected by Doris BRAITHWAITE

Louis James who set up first course in African Lit at KENT UNIV., C artists movement suggested long before, influenced by Ghanaian formation in London

56 Thesis, a correspondence may EKB's thought influenced by jazz / be found between Jazz and contemporary Caribbean culture; basic elements, word, image & rhythm then the nature of improvisation; he wanted to achieve "a jazz novel" - repetition and refrain. The oral tradition provided a model for W.I. literature which should be based on speech rhythms, suggestive of indigenous aesthetic for W.I. creativity and criticism PTO

- 57 following upon writers based in Harlem USA.  
Becomes SLIGHTLY PRESCRIPTIVE "to make sense  
writers have to write about their society. Which  
is predominantly negro" What about Indo-white??  
This point has led to division that continues now  
Discussion heavily in favour of writers but artists
- P58 and sculptors did take part. Jim Haynes of  
Edinburgh's Traverse involvement. CAM wanted  
to use Jeannette Cochran but Haynes eventually left  
to found ARTS Lab in Drury Lane. First Public  
Reading in March 67 by London Traverse and  
New Beacon of EKB's RIGHTS OF PASSAGE whom  
"language reflects the complete continuum of  
Caribbean speech, cutting between international  
standard English, Caribbean English, and Creole..."
- 59 — movement poets quote —  
EKB Reading a major event. NEW BEACON offering  
its titles there etc. JLR inviting prominent people.  
Good publicity for CAM too plus impact on W.I.  
people. BY this time others very practically
- 61 involved: LOUIS JAMES had got insect leaflets to  
programme on CAM and offering membership etc  
Contacts and linked network strengthened.
- 62 Important to stress it was this performance of  
innovative ~~off~~ creative work by founder member that  
sparked things off in the wider context
- P63 During first 6 months CAM programme included talks  
and symposia, readings & performances, art exhibitions  
& films; plus a newsletter, bookselling and a contact  
network.  
Music was central, the calypso, kaiso  
BUT ONE CRUCIAL ASPECT CENTRAL TO CAM  
WAS THAT IT REACHED OUT TO THE ORDINARY

## WI COMMUNITY

P68 Calypso (Sparrow) Gordon Rohlehr  
sparrow and the language of the Calypso

P74 Aubrey Williams on what he values  
78 Hearne - Patterson controversy

ARTISTS  
Symphon  
P 80

"spread of generations and backgrounds"

82 Aubrey Williams disappointed at audience reaction and  
told them "To go home and think"

85 GIVES CLEARER IDEA

Errol Lloyd: "If I could paint the way Sparrow sings  
Calypso I'd be very happy"

CROSS FERTILISATION  
AND GENERAUST

SMALL INFORMAL GATHERINGS  
exclusive and  
risked becoming <sup>exclusive and</sup> cliques but were essential to the  
dynamic inner core of CAM

84 C L R JAMES paper "The resolution which  
abolished slavery... slave stood up and asked for it"  
HAITIAN REVOLUTION. "The Caribbean people  
have got to educate the Caribbean people"

86 "building a historical consciousness"

87 students and activists from the "ordinary immigrant"  
community

92 Stokely Carmichael's impact on CAM BRITISH  
LABOUR GOVERNMENT banned him from the country.

95 Brathwaite's dream of "summit" conference  
between West Indian writers and all the others in  
Britain

98/97 MONA GOVEIA "the contemporary social & cultural  
framework in which Caribbean artists have to operate  
is one in which there is constant conflict between  
'the very strong, very entrenched interest in racial  
inequality' and the new political system... which depends  
on support from the black masses" "Artists and  
intellectuals have a choice "between the conflicting  
elements etc

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Theatre Run Holder - Pearl Connor

FIRST PHASE OF CAM ended in Dec 67 with

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Brothwaite's removal to W.I.

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CAM the Book Fair's ancestor "JLR

Notes of Brainstorm Meeting on Thursday 8th November 1993

Present: Mandla Langa (Chair), John La Rose, Jim Kelman, Dada Imarogbe, Pitika Ntuli, Hazel Carey, Linda Bernhardt

Apologies: Dawn Garrigan, Peter Blackman, Margaret Busby, Ethel De Keyser, Su Lubner.

Chair welcomed Jim and Johna and outlined concerns about events in South Africa and the world and the looming or increasing spectre of racism. In this climate creative elements become central.

If 27 April election date then conference should make a contribution and highlight the issues.

Pitika gave briefing on issues the conference should address that he and Hazel had prepared:

- He noted that the conference should indicate continuity and that we are moving forward
- there should be papers prepared in advance for all sessions
- rapporteurs needed for all sessions

a) Issue of language and the media

Issue of language, long-term - South Africa is multi-lingual. (If material is going to SA should be sent in languages people can read).

Not language in the literal sense -

visual language

performance language - sketches and plays already happening.

poetry and music

What role of the arts in language?

In looking at the media - how to approach the media

- how to publicise media

who controls this for the elections and long-term and ownership

In the 80's saw how popular culture became part of political - how is this used for the vote.

John pointed out that elections were only the beginning of a process and need to look at the issue of what people are voting for.

2) issue of representation

3) Short term and long term goals

Most important phenomenon is elections and this should generate discussion.

Q of the purpose of elections.

To what extent can cultural input help in the process to send a warning to participants of the need for people to look realistically at this process.

To what extent will that exercise there connect to processes here.

The fact that people are involved in elections in this country and are also dealing with racism here.

Language of domination

Hope for a new language of human relations through cultural forms.

-How to construct panels which reflect concerns of this region and those of SA and Elections.

Issue of racism here.

John - In post-war period all 3rd world has gone through elections but lots of the people / these places don't feel that this means much Ghana '57 immense turmoil and opposition. to what extent can we put this on agenda -----through mass movements there will be change

Q of Sa and elections is predicated on fact (reality) that the majority of the people have never voted. - even in colonial countries there was a tradition of voters but this is not the case in SA. Again although countries racist, not enshrined - the way struggle and negotiations have taken place have led to decision that election has to be the way. We recognise the need to function in this world inside an elected system.

Need to look at how racism is manipulated here to learn how racism will be manipulated there.

Remember Gramsci - War of position and manoeuvre.

Jim pointed out the the organising committee for this conference is involved in the arts and that this raised some questions vis the need for a programme for arts and yet a programme for action. How to connect SA to UK ( a big jump)

Pitika - ostensibly apartheid is buried but we need to talk about what is happening elsewhere for e.g. the AWB links with right wing groups in this country.

Jim - we need to clarification of where the real fight is.

M - Why we feel the process needs to take place is because there are people in the international arena who have the respect and whose writing can illuminate the contradictions. Thinking can lead to action - In literature ways of drawing marginalised communities together.

Pitika - artists as artists to build links - to create margins - to make breathing space.

John mandated to write history of elections and present at conference as well as to brainstorm sessions(?) lessons to be learned.

John - we need to be clear .....I am for elections and universal adult franchise. We need to concentrate on how poor people use their vote, where do we go with elections because frustrations emerge later.

Want popular mandate for progress in society.

M - paper on lessons - crisis of expectancy

Jim - mandated to write situations - lessons from other circumstances - minority preoccupations. What should be happening and how this confronts racism. Speaking from the margins. Lessons to be learnt. Votes in Scotland etc.

Jim pointed out the danger of trying to be instructive / prescriptive for the masses.

Assumptions being made by ANC unchallenged. Suppression and oppression exist in UK

We can learn from the Caribbean experience of art and politics where political and cultural activists there played a functional role to create discussion and dialogue and heighten awareness of the issues.

M - I think we didn't say that all avenues becoming means to try to create dispensation to make life liveable for majority. Need to have words enshrined even if they are not respected. My generation might not reap fruit but hope lies in the civics and trade unions

Essential that discussion papers are sent to SA as cultural boycott effectively shut off access to international debate.

John - fact of black votes in southern USA meant that condition there normalised.

Pitika - the issue of language is the issue of the media is the issue of representation in this case the election is a form of language

Jim is also talking about language when talking about writing from the edge.

Gender is also an issue

M - The issue is all voiceless people

M - Transitional councils - joint military command will form peace force -

To attempt to ensure all can vote and to attempt to curtail violence. Importance of the role of international monitors but this is a question of strategy and tactics - depends on how they are placed. We have to learn from the problems of some UN missions.

Q whether artist is also a cultural worker

Jim felt that perhaps people in the ANC expect too much of themselves.

John - because of nature of nationalist struggles when elections come people are raring to vote.

Pitika - how do artists react in the long term (e.g. of squatter camps and how people can be co-opted and lured into voter trap)

M - people who are writers etc (public figures) go to SA to reflect on these issues and become custodians of these moments.

Jim - one of the most optimistic things from the April CDC Conference is that young artists are confident of their right to be artists.

John - Is this what the conference is really about - the right to be an artist is fundamental but the artist is oppressed.

M - In this conference people come forth to share how they see things. We are talking to people who come from different places.  
We are aware that things (elections?) might not go according to how they're planned but we need to make dreams functional.

John - How do we contribute to ensure better prospects for the future?

Date of Conference: Fri nite - Opening - 8th October  
Saturday 9th October  
Sunday 10th October

**Date of next meeting: 22nd July 1993 at 6.30pm**